

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of routing a connectivity plane message to a mobile terminal, in a radio network, which can be reached via two or more network nodes of a first type, comprising the steps of:
 - determining positional information, by a network node of a second type to which the mobile terminal is attached, indicating the geographical location of the mobile terminal and routing information, the routing information being associated with the network node of a second type;
 - based on the positional information, selecting a network node of the first type via which the connectivity plane message is to be routed to the mobile terminal;
 - designating a roaming number based on the selected network node of the first type;
 - sending the roaming number by the network node of the second type; and
 - routing the connectivity plane message to the mobile terminal via the selected network node of the first type.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the positional information indicates the geographical location of the mobile terminal within an area served by the network node of the second type.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein a network control plane message is routed via the determined network node of the first type to the network node of the second type.
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein routing of the connectivity plane message is performed in a communications network that includes a first network portion having a split architecture and a second network portion having a monolithic architecture.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein the selected network node of the first type is arranged between the first network portion and the second network portion.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein the network node of the first type is selected such that resources utilized by the routed connectivity plane message in the first network portion are minimized.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the positional information is included in the routing information.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the positional information is received separately from the routing information.
9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of determining, based on the positional information, or receiving transmission information specifying the transmission regime via which the connectivity plane message is to be routed to the determined network node of the first type.
10. (Previously Presented) A method of controlling the routing of a connectivity plane message to a mobile terminal which can be reached via two or more network nodes of a first type and which is attached to a network node of a second type, comprising the steps of:
 - receiving a request for routing information;
 - generating positional information, by the network node of a second type to which the mobile terminal is attached, indicating the geographical location of the mobile terminal and routing information associated with the network node of the second type to which the mobile terminal is attached; and
 - transmitting a roaming number providing a preferred routing using the positional information and choosing a determined network node of the first type to which the connectivity plane message is to be routed.

11-14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously Presented) A network component for controlling the routing of a connectivity plane message to a mobile terminal which can be reached via two or more network nodes and which is attached to the network component, the network component comprising:

a first interface for receiving a request for routing information;

a processing component for generating positional information indicating the geographical location of the mobile terminal and routing information associated with the network component, the processing component designating a roaming number based on the geographical location of the mobile terminal and the network component; and

a second interface for transmitting the roaming number to enable a receiving network switch to select one of the two or more network nodes via which the connectivity plane message is to be routed to the mobile terminal.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 5 wherein said network node of second type comprises a mobile switching center (MSC) node.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 5 wherein said network node of first type comprises a media gateway (MGW) node connecting said two network portions.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein said network node of a second type is a switching node with a fixed association ~~associated~~ between a particular geographical service area and said network node of second type.

19.-21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the two or more network nodes of a first type are combined network nodes, each combined network node comprising a Media Gateway (MGW) and a Signaling Gateway (SGW).

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the two or more network nodes are combined network nodes, each of which comprise a Media Gateway (MGW) and a Signaling Gateway (SGW).

24. (Previously Presented) A method, in a communication network employing a network control plane and a connectivity plane, of routing a connectivity plane message to a mobile terminal that can be reached via two or more network nodes of the connectivity plane, the connectivity plane message being routed separately from an associated network control plane message, the method comprising the steps of:

- determining positional information of a geographic location of the mobile terminal, with respect to the two or more network nodes of the connectivity plane;

- receiving routing information associated with a network node of the network control plane to which the mobile terminal is attached;

- using the positional information of the mobile terminal to choose one of the two or more network nodes of the connectivity plane via which the connectivity plane message is routed to the mobile terminal; and

- routing the connectivity plane message to the mobile terminal via the selected network node of the connectivity plane.